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LETTER DATED 12 AUGUST 1997 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to convey the attached letter, dated 11 August 1997, which I have received from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Italy to the United Nations (see annex). Attached to the letter is the eleventh and final biweekly report on the multinational protection force for Albania requested by the Security Council in its resolutions 1101 (1997) of 28 March and 1114 (1997) of 19 June 1997.

I should appreciate your bringing the present letter and its annex to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Kofi A. ANNAN

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Annex

Letter dated 11 August 1997 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Italy to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to submit the eleventh and final report on the multinational protection force for Albania (see appendix). The report is submitted pursuant to the requirement set out in paragraph 9 of Security Council resolution 1114 (1997) of 19 June 1997, in which the Council requested the Member States participating in the multinational protection force to provide reports, at least every two weeks, through the Secretary-General, to the Council. The tenth such report was conveyed to you on 30 July 1997 (see S/1997/601).

I should be grateful if you could have the text of the present letter and the eleventh report circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Paolo CASARDI
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

Appendix

Eleventh and final report to the Security Council on the operation of the multinational protection force in Albania

I. INTRODUCTION

1. On 28 March 1997, the Security Council adopted resolution 1101 (1997), in paragraph 2 of which it welcomed the offer made by certain Member States to establish a temporary and limited multinational protection force to facilitate the safe and prompt delivery of humanitarian assistance and to help create a secure environment for the missions of international organizations in Albania, including those providing humanitarian assistance.

2. On 19 June 1997, the Security Council adopted resolution 1114 (1997), in paragraph 2 of which it welcomed the readiness of the countries contributing to the multinational protection force to maintain their military contingents in Albania for a limited time. In paragraph 3 of the resolution, the Council welcomed the intention of the countries contributing to the force to continue to facilitate the safe and prompt delivery of humanitarian assistance and to help create a secure environment for the missions of international organizations in Albania, including those providing humanitarian assistance. It also took note of all the elements contained in the sixth report on the operation of the multinational protection force in Albania (see S/1997/460), concerning, inter alia, the electoral monitoring mission of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and decided that the operation would be limited to a period of 45 days from 28 June 1997.

3. In both resolutions, the Security Council requested the Member States participating in the multinational protection force to provide periodic reports to the Council through the Secretary-General, at least every two weeks. The first 10 reports on the operation of the force were provided on 9 and 25 April, 9 and 23 May, 6, 13 and 26 June and 2, 16 and 30 July 1997.

4. This is the eleventh and last report to the Security Council on the operation of the multinational protection force in Albania and is submitted to the Council at the conclusion of the operation for a final assessment of the situation.

II. MULTINATIONAL PROTECTION FORCE

A. Political guidance

5. The Steering Committee, consisting of the political directors of the 11 troop-contributing countries and the Commander of the operation, followed the overall situation on the ground and the full compliance of the activities of the Force with the Security Council mandate. It had held meetings on 4, 9, 14, 23

and 30 April, 6, 13, 14 and 22 May, 4, 10, 20, 25 and 29 June and 2, 15, 23 and 30 July.

6. Representatives of the following international organizations attended the meetings of the Steering Committee as observers, as appropriate: the United Nations and its related agencies, the OSCE, the European Union (EU), the Western European Union (WEU) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

B. Cooperation with Albanian authorities and with international organizations

7. Albanian representatives attended several meetings of the Steering Committee when appropriate and provided information on developments in the political situation in Albania.

8. The force facilitated the safe and prompt delivery of humanitarian assistance and helped create a secure environment for the missions of international organizations in Albania, including those providing humanitarian assistance, in accordance with the mandate defined in resolutions 1101 (1997) and 1114 (1997).

9. The force has helped to create a secure environment during the electoral process, in particular for the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights/Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe missions, in the framework of the Security Council mandate.

10. Two international meetings on Albania were convened at Rome, on 26 May and 31 July 1997, under the chairmanship of the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Lambarto Dini. All the troop-contributing countries and Finland, Germany, Japan, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, the Russian Federation, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America attended the meetings. The following international organizations were also present: the United Nations and its related agencies, EU, OSCE, the Council of Europe, WEU, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the European Investment Bank (EIB) and ICRC. Albania participated in the meetings at a political level.

C. Force deployment

11. The multinational protection force was formed through the contributions of 11 countries, with Italy as the leading nation. During the electoral process the force reached its maximum deployment, with the following national units present in Albania:

Country	Number and type of unit (total strength)
Austria	1 company (110)
Belgium	1 medical unit (14)
Denmark	1 company (56)
France	1 navy infantry regiment (938)
Greece	1 infantry regiment (797)
Italy	1 infantry regiment 1 para regiment 1 logistic regiment 2 mechanized infantry regiments 2 aviation battalions 1 assault para regiment 1 signal regiment 1 military police regiment 1 navy infantry battalion 1 field hospital (3,778)
Portugal	1 C-130 aircraft and crew
Romania	1 mixed infantry battalion (398)
Slovenia	1 medical unit (24)
Spain	1 infantry battalion (342)
Turkey	1 navy infantry regiment (758)

A total of 7,215 units were deployed. The withdrawal of the force was completed on 11 August.

12. In order to fulfil its mandate, the multinational protection force carried out 1,598 missions, covering a total of 2,735,764 kilometres. The following activities were performed: 1,397 daily escorts, 65 route security missions, 27 dedicated escorts for long humanitarian missions, 151 reconnaissance missions and 37 sanitary missions. During the political elections the multinational protection force provided security to 238 OSCE teams, covering a total of 12,000 kilometres. Within the security framework provided by the force, the following humanitarian aid was distributed to 73 different locations: 5,168.3 tons of food, 176 tons of seed, 339 tons of medicines, 63 tons of clothes, 10 tons of building materials, 4 tons of school supplies and various vehicles and machinery for rubbish collection and water purification. In order to provide the necessary logistic support to the operation, 59 sea-lift missions were performed, covering 3,193 nautical miles, with 3,722 navigation hours; 943 air-lift sorties were performed with 1,311 flying hours.

III. CONCLUSIONS

13. Operation Alba has been a good example of how a political and military operation of international stabilization can be undertaken with responsibility and solidarity. What has been in place in Albania for the last four and a half months was not in fact a traditional peacekeeping or a peacemaking operation but rather one of complex nature, involving assistance from the international community within a multinational security framework provided by the multinational protection force and specifically geared to protect such assistance. There is no doubt that without security, assistance would not have been productive or even possible. The presence of the multinational protection force affectively blocked the risk of Albania sliding towards anarchy or even internal political conflict and allowed the various international organizations and individual States willing to provide practical help to Albania to organize assistance in a secure environment. Thus a notable improvement in the situation in the country was brought about in a short period of time, restoring confidence in national prospects.

14. The safe and prompt delivery of humanitarian assistance was possible from the beginning of the deployment of the force and throughout the operation. Adequate and acceptable elections - as described in the final report of OSCE on the parliamentary elections in Albania - were made possible, not only thanks to the security framework provided by the force but also through the logistic assistance it gave to OSCE.

15. The force has been temporary and limited: during the electoral process its strength was increased for the specific purpose of providing security for the OSCE monitoring teams and parliamentary observers.

16. The operation was affected by strict time constraints, mainly because of its very rapid activation. Nevertheless, Operation Alba was successful thanks to the efforts of the multinational contingents deployed as well as to the professionalism of its commanders. The force achieved its goals also thanks to the ability of the multinational command to implement its mandate through harmonious and consistent use of the various assets and capabilities of the units provided by the 11 contributing countries.

17. For the purpose of providing political guidance to the multinational protection force, a Steering Committee was established with Italy as Chairman and France Vice-Chairman. The Steering Committee drafted its own decision-making and procedural rules, which proved to be effective. In addition to giving political guidance to the force, it reported regularly to the Security Council on the progress of the operation and was a useful forum for consultation on the international effort for Albania. The Steering Committee operated by consensus. This mechanism proved to be a political asset, since all countries shared responsibility for the Committee's decisions, reinforcing cohesion and solidarity.

18. At one point, the Steering Committee recommended that the mandate to the force provided by resolution 1104 (1997) be extended by the Security Council until the completion of the electoral process. Since the beginning of the operation the Steering Committee identified security priorities as areas of

possible international action. At the end of the operation, on the basis also of the experience of the force, the Steering Committee suggested further possible initiatives in support of the Government of Albania in the field of security to take place after the departure of the force.

19. The Secretariat of the Steering Committee remained active for the duration of the operation, keeping in constant contact with the Command of the force through the operational headquarters established in Rome. It provided information as appropriate to participating countries and international organizations involved.

20. All members shared the understanding that consultations at the policy level should be as intense as possible, with particular emphasis on analysis and information-sharing, in a spirit of full transparency. Great attention was given to facilitating coordination between the multinational protection force and the various international organizations involved. In this respect the Steering Committee dedicated a significant part of its meetings to interacting with representatives of international organizations who made known to the force, through the Committee, their requirements and provided relevant information. In this framework, dialogue with OSCE, the EU Presidency and Commission, WEU, the World Food Programme (WFP) and ICRC was particularly intense. At the local level a special coordination unit was established in Tirana.

21. Cooperation with the Albanian authorities was assured, as appropriate, through constant contact both at the political and operational levels. The participation of Albanian representatives in the Steering Committee meetings allowed an exchange of useful information, in a spirit of cooperation and trust. It also allowed prompt and resolute action whenever necessary.

22. As a result of Operation Alba, it is hoped that a dramatic page of Albanian history has now been turned. A new phase must start without delay, focusing on the rehabilitation of state institutions and the return of the country to an orderly social, political and economic condition, within a restored climate of confidence on the part of the Albanian people in their own future with the active support of the international community. The international conference held at Rome on 31 July 1997 was a milestone in this process in preparation for a ministerial conference and a donors' conference in the autumn.

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